

**From:** zan/Charles  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 1/24/02 3:18am  
**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

I am writing to express my vehement opposition to settling the antitrust matter with Microsoft in the manner proposed by the company and agreed to by some of the states participating in the suit.

It strikes me as especially bizarre to remedy the hindrance of competitors by bundling free competing products with a dominant product, Windows, by allowing the offending company to give even more free software away. This educational "gift" is especially insidious, because it gives Microsoft an easy inroad into the education market where it still has a competitor in the form of Apple Computer. In Microsoft's eyes, this is merely another software giveaway that will reap profits further down the line.

Microsoft engaged in illegal, anticompetitive actions and continues to do so. For instance, by recently integrating its MSN internet services with its Internet Explorer browser, Microsoft was able to wrest the position as top web destination for searches from Yahoo! Their tactic: convert the default "page not found" into an MSN search, driving users to their own products and advertisers. Experts note that fully half of Microsoft's MSN search visitors arrive there via this method.

Users do not try MSN's search, compare it to other services and favor the best provider; they are sheperded there by default as a result of using other Microsoft products. In a free-market system, I thought the point was to reward innovation and quality, not ubiquitousness.

But Microsoft seems to think that only its own interests matter. Again and again, its tactics are designed for nothing else but the benefit of Microsoft, and are very seldom beneficial to the American consumer. Bearing in mind that Microsoft has been asked before to voluntarily alter its behavior and it has failed to do so, I urge you to reject this ridiculous settlement

Charles Christensen  
Chicago, IL

--

---

...from the original Roman concept, the symbol for [fascism] was a bundle of bound twigs. The idea being, "In unity there is strength."  
...which inevitably will become, "In uniformity there is strength." It's better if all those sticks are the same size and length, because then they'll make a tidier bundle, which consequently leads to the kind of fascism that we saw in the '30s and '40s.

-- Alan Moore

=====